Cultus Humanae

International Students' Newsletter

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Concordia University
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International students arriving in Canada, 1990.
Photo by Harvey Haldorson

Homestay Programme 1991

By Julie Daignault

It must have been quite a shock for International students when they first got here. Not only did they have to get used to life at Concordia University, but they also had to get used to life in Montreal. Most Canadian students know how frustrating it can be just to go through the registration process and how stressful meeting deadlines for papers can be.

However, unlike International students, they didn't have to deal with the uncertainties of finding themselves in a new culture.

This is why the Homestay Programme was instituted last April: to make it easier for as many International students as possible to adjust to their new environment.

If you took part in last year's programme, I'm sure you found that it eased you nicely into your academic (and social!!!) life at Concordia. I think you would also agree that it was very successful.

Students, as well as host families participating in the Homestay Programme last year, said the experience was beneficial to them in many ways.

Tamiko from Japan: "It was a good chance to get to know Canadian culture and Canadian people and a great help in finding my way around in a completely new environment."

Mr. Alvi, a host: "It has so many advantages to have people from different cultures. We both can learn from each other."

Petra van der Tol from the Netherlands: "It was good to have a sort of home for the first week and people to explain about a lot of new things here. I could concentrate on other things like looking for a room and registration, without worriying about a place to stay."

This year, the Homestay Programme will be even bigger: the aim is to find 100 hosts admidst the Concordia community to welcome International students coming next August. So please pass the word onto the friends you made here and let them know how they could make sure that another student like you will never forget their experience abroad.

Thank you very much and good luck this semester!

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NEWS

New fees for renewing student authorization

Processing fees of $75 will be charged to all International students for the **issuance and renewal of their "Student Authorizations"** , starting on April 1, 1991. This was announced by Mr. Murray Gordon, Chief Visitor Programs at Employment and Immigration Canada, at the Canadian Bureau for International Education 1990 Conference (CBIE) in Halifax.

CBIE members and International Student Advisers across Canada disagree with this new policy and have asked that CBIE condemn strongly the proposal of a processing fee policy for the issuance of "Student Authorizations" and demand immediate withdrawal of this proposal.

In a press release issued on October 31, 1990, James W. Fox, Executive Director of CBIE wrote: "This fee is very shortsighted and seems to be based on a misunderstanding - even in market and economic terms - of what International students mean to Canada. International students contribute to the Canadian economy each year nearly $500 million in foreign exchange earnings...While other countries are doing all possible to recruit students in a highly competitive international market, Canada continues to lack the will and cohesive strategy to compete successfully. Instead, in piecemeal fashion, policies and practices continue to emerge as clear impediments to huge potential success on the international market. The (proposed) $75 visa processing fee is one, among a number, of impediments..."

The International Student Office will receive further information on this new policy and will publish details in the next issue of **Cultus Humanae**.

CULTUS HUMANAE

Cultus Humanae will be published four times during the 1990-1991 academic year, to inform and educate a readership of Concordia University International and Canadian students, faculty and staff, and to encourage interaction and understanding among them.

Editor
Franka van den Hende

This issue:
Contributors:
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Photos

Excellent pictures of International students were taken last August and September by Harvey Haldorson, the 1990 Homestay Coordinator. If you want copies, consult the catalogue at the office and place your order. The price is $0.75 for a 3.5 x 5 photo. You may also order larger sizes.

The next issue of Cultus Humanae will be out by April 15! You have to pick it up at the International Student Office, 2135 Mackay. Please make the effort to do so, it will be worth it!

Japan: western, yet different

The country of the rising sun

By Franka van den Hende

"Nippon" or" Nihon" stands for: "place from where the sun rises". That is how the Japanese refer to their country, but the formal name, designating the country in the English language, is Japan.

Tamiko Yoshikawa, 25, is one of the many Japanese students studying at Concordia this year. She arrived in Canada in August and will stay for two years to get her degree in Psychology. She is proud of her country and welcomes the opportunity to talk about it.

Japan, a mountainous country, consisting of four main islands (Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, Kyushu), is about one-twentyfifth the size of the United States. It has a population of 120 million people, among whom there are few immigrants. About 12 million people live in or around Tokyo, one of the world's most populous cities.

Although Japan's history goes back a long way, Tamiko is more interested in two events in Japan's recent history: "The Meiji Restoration in 1867 was a big change for Japan. It marked the end of Japan's isolation. Since then, Japan has implemented a wide range of measures modeled on European examples. All power from the feudal government was turned over to the Emperor, who still had enormous power in those days. But Japan was on its way to becoming a modern nation."

"Another important event for Japan was the Second World War. "Japan was defeated; the United States dropped two atomic bombs, we had to start from nothing again.

"The war also was the end of the Emperor's real power and the beginning of a westernized democracy."

The Japanese economy grew very fast after the Second World War. According to Tamiko, this was probably due to the work ethic of the Japanese and their high level of education and technical skills. Japan today is one of the leading countries in the world in the electronics, shipbuilding and construction industries.

Students in Japan go through six years of elementary school, three years of junior high school, three years of senior high school and four years of university.

"Education is considered to be very important in Japan," Tamiko says. "From your birth your parents plan your education. It's important which university you go to because universities in Japan are very competitive. Your future will depend on the name of the university."

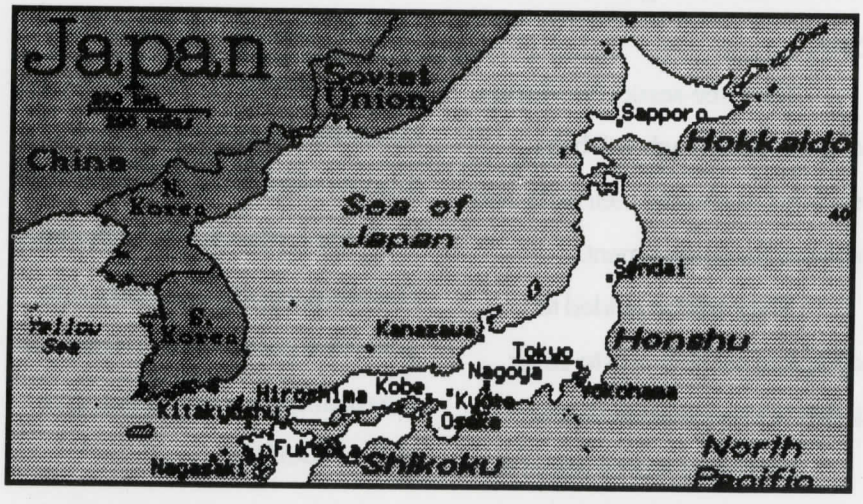
Tamiko in Japan

It may surprise some, but Tamiko believes Canadian students work much harder. "They also participate much more in class. In Japan you just listen to the teacher and take notes."

Most Japanese are tolerant when it comes to religious beliefs and do not think it strange to be involved simultaneously in several religions. For example, says Tamiko: " You are baptized at a Shinto shrine: you get married at a Christian church and, surprisingly, your funeral is usually in the Buddhistic style. There is no State religion in Japan."

As Japan is very westernized these days, Tamiko did not have many problems in adjusting to Canadian society. "We have so much in common now," Tamiko says. "Nothing is really different anymore, apart from the cars running on the opposite side and the co-ed dormitories."

Tamiko's expectations about Canada turned out to be quite realistic. "I really like it here," Tamiko says. "There's lots of green space and many nice people. As I only speak English and Japanese, this seemed to be the best place for me to go. And so far it has been a great experience."



MORE NEWS

Sugaring-off party

In keeping up with a tradition in Quebec, there will be a sugaring-off party on **Thursday, March 28**. The party will be at 'L'Erabliere les 4 feuilles' in Rougemont, 45 kms from Montreal, region Monteregie. You can join other International students from the University of Montreal and the University of Quebec in Montreal. Departure will be at 4 p.m. at the Hall Building.

Tickets are available at the International Student Office for $15, which includes transportation by bus, a delicious traditional dinner and a dance. There are only 25 tickets available. Tickets will be sold on a **first come, first serve basis.** Buy your ticket as soon as possible to make sure you're not going to miss this!

Welcoming committees

Last year, students from India, Bangladesh, Norway, Hong Kong and the ECSGA had the brilliant initiative to organize *Welcoming Committees* whose mandates were to help the newcomers from their country upon arrival in Canada.

Their assistance has had a very positive impact on the integration of new International students and I would like to acknowledge their remarkable dedication.

Now, if I dare to think and dream big, I would like to witness this year the creation of "Welcoming Committees" from many more countries. I am suggesting the idea hoping that you will be interested in such a project.

All you have to do is write a letter in which you invite the new students to write to the members of your committee or contact them in Montreal if they need assistance. Your letter will then be included with the *Information Guide* our office is sending to newly admitted International students.

It is a project easy to organize and one in which your own experience can benefit another student tremendously. Think about it and give me a call if you want to form a "Welcoming Committee". Please do it soon, because we start mailing the "Information Guides" in March.

I am counting on your collaboration! Thank you.

Claudette Fortier, International Student Adviser.

Hong Kong employment assistance

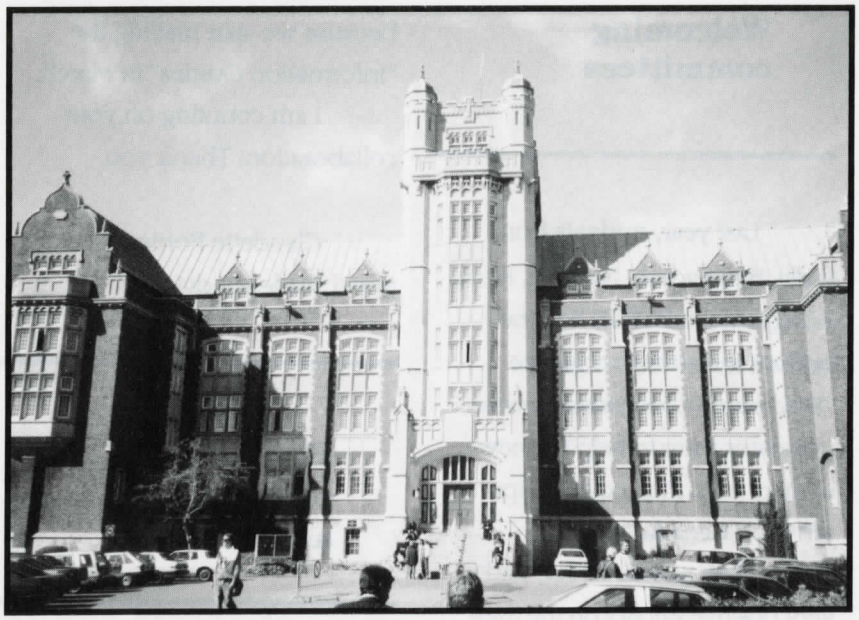
The Higher Education Employment Service (H.E.E.S.) of the Hong Kong Labour Department offers employment assistance to graduates of Hong Kong origin returning to Hong Kong. The H.E.E.S. offers **five main type of services, free of charge**: job placement service, counselling service, enquiries about the latest information on the local job market, pre-graduate registration and career information.

Registration forms and more information are available at the International Student Office.

The History of Concordia

118 years since classes began

By Marc Lanteigne



Concordia University in 1991 - Photo by Franka v.d. Hende

Concordia University is a combination of two schools, Sir George Williams University and Loyola College, that joined together in 1974.

Sir George Williams University was originally the first chapter of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) to be opened in North America. It was opened at Victoria Square in 1851, as a meeting place as well as a place of lodging and education for young men of Montreal. The first classes at the YMCA began in 1873, with only two courses offered: French and Phonography (shorthand).

As the number of students rose and more courses were added, the YMCA became a full college. In 1926, when the enrolment exceeded 700, the YMCA became Sir George Williams College, named after the man who founded the first YMCA in England. Diplomas were given out to the first graduating class in 1935, a historic year for the school.

Because the new College was so popular, it became more and more difficult to find room for the classes. A new, larger building on Drummond Street was completed in 1956, and named the Kenneth E. Norris building, after the man who became principal of the College in 1935, and who died before the building was dedicated.

In 1959, the College received full university status. By that time, however, the Norris Building had become overcrowded and a new main building was needed.

In 1966, the cube-shaped Henry F. Hall Building was opened on the corner of Bishop Street and de Maisonneuve Boulevard. The new building contained twelve floors of classrooms and many study areas and other services. Soon more buildings were either bought or rented to keep up with the University's growing population.

Loyola College opened its doors in the former Convent of the Sacred Heart at Bleury and St. Catherine in 1896. Its founder was Father Gregory S. O'Bryan. The name 'Loyola' comes from St. Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the worldwide Jesuit order of priests who ran the College.

The first courses were in Latin, the Classics and English syntax, with 150 students enrolled in the first year.

Two years after the opening a fire destroyed Loyola and the classes had to be moved to another building on Drummond Street. Conditions became crowded as more students enrolled and more subjects were offered. The first degrees were handed out in 1903. You can view pictures of the early graduating classes on the walls of Loyola's Central Building.

Faced with overcrowding, the Loyola administrators decided to purchase fifty acres of the old Decary muskmelon farm near Montreal West in order to build an expanded college. The fathers were forced to borrow money from the Society of Jesus Mission Fund to pay for the land, but the deal was made in 1900 for $25,297 and 10.5 cents. Construction started in 1913 and the Loyola Refectory Building opened its new location in 1916. All of the students were transferred there the same year. The loan was repaid in 1925.

More buildings were added to the campus as more students enrolled. The Central Building was completed in 1947 and the more modernistic Drummond Science complex opened in 1961.

With the merging of Loyola and Sir George, Concordia has become one of Canada's largest universities with about 26,000 students , of whom 4% come from abroad. More than 160 graduate and undergraduate programmes are available to the students, as well as a wide variety of cultural, educational and sports activities.

Concordia is still expanding today. The latest building that will be added to the more than 60 buildings that Concordia already operates is the new Library Complex that is expected to open in 1992.

WORKSHOPS

Signing or cancelling a lease ; how and when

Do you know that if you want to terminate a lease, you must write the landlord a notice of non-extension of lease between three and six months before termination of lease? Do you also know how to verify if the rent increase is appropriate and what to do if it seems too high?

Understanding your rights as tenants and the specific regulations surrounding rental agreements is not an easy task but an important one for you. To help you fully understand this subject, the CUSA Off-Campus Housing Office has agreed to organize a workshop for International students. Come with your questions and bring examples of the problems you have experienced so far.

The workshop, conducted by Rosemary Glavic, will be held **Friday March 15, from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the Hall Building, room 405.**

If you have any questions and cannot attend the seminar, you may address them to the Off-Campus Housing Office, Hall Building, room 637, 848-7474, or come to their information booth in the lobby of the Hall Building on the following dates: March 19, 21, 25 and 27, between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Job search

Since an International student may obtain employment in a course-related job for a 12 month period after graduation, a workshop has been designed for those students who will be eligible to seek and accept employment in Canada after their graduation this year.

The three-session workshop of three hours each will help students to identify their skills and abilities for employment.

They will be guided to complete resumés and to cover letters and application forms.

Interviews will be discussed and practised. Other topics will include the "hidden job" market and company research.

The workshops will be held at George Williams campus, Hall Building, room 440, on **Tuesdays, March 12,19 and 26 from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.** Registration ($3) at the I.S.O.

Income tax

Revenue Canada recently published a tax guide for International students studying in Canada. The guide explains who must file an income tax return and how it is to be completed and gives you detailed information on tax credits, child care expenses, moving expenses, etc. Copies are available at the International Student Office.

A seminar on the subject, conducted by Mrs. Lise Trudel from Revenue Canada ,will be held on **Friday, March 22, in the Hall Building, room 435 from 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.** Please contact the International Student Office to register: 848-3515.